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The American Numismatic Association (ANA), a nonprofit, educational organization, was founded in 1891 and claims members all over the world. The Association's official magazine, *The Numismatist*, was first published in 1888 by Dr. George F. Heath. Chartered for 50 years by an Act of Congress in 1912 and renewed in perpetuity by an Act of Congress on June 10, 1962, the ANA is a mutual organization for the benefit of its members. It does not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, disability, or any other status protected by state or local law.

Contributors

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Nick Bruyer began his numismatic career at Paramount International Coin Corporation. There, he helped

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Rick Kay has more than 25 years of experience in U.S. patterns. He has spent over 10 years researching die and metallic varieties of 1854 and 1855 Flying Eagle large cent patterns. Kay is a Professional Coin Grading Service and Numismatic Guaranty Company

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Diana Plattner studied creative writing and literature at the University of Southern Mississippi's Center for Writers. She joined Whitman Publishing in 2005 and since then has been the managing editor for most editions of *A Guide Book of United States Coins*.



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SPANISH ISLAND

A 19th-century medal sheds light on a turbulent time in the Dominican Republic's history.

➔ At the end of the 18th century, Spain and France signed the Treaty of Basel, in which the Spaniards ceded to France the city and colony of Santo Domingo on the island of Hispaniola (present-day Haiti and Dominican Republic). The 19th century was a turbulent time for Santo Domingo—it was briefly ruled by Haitian rebels before France intervened and took over in 1802. Santo Domingo came under Spanish rule once again in 1809. After overthrowing the Spanish in 1821, Santo Domingo was annexed by Haiti until 1844, when it gained its independence. However, the region continued to experience profound instability. Since 1838, members of its ruling class had sought to join a foreign power, such as England, the United States, Spain, or France, primarily to gain protection from invasions by neighboring Haiti.

Dominican General Pedro Santana wrote a letter to the queen in which he expressed his interest in having Spain annex Santo Domingo. The territory that constituted the Dominican Republic was reincorporated to the Spanish monarchy by royal decree of May 19, 1861. Article 2 of the decree entrusted the governor captain general of Cuba with issuing the appropriate provisions for the execution of this decree. On October 6, 1861, a royal court and mayoralties were created in Santo Domingo, thus restoring Spanish rule, but only for the administration of justice.

In 1863 Dominican nationalists began fighting Spanish soldiers, and the ensuing Restoration War ended with a Dominican victory and the establishment of a second republic. Queen Isabella II formally annulled the annexation, and the remaining Spanish troops returned to Spain.

SPANISH MEDAL

Spanish authorities in the Caribbean requested the monarchy to make gold, silver, and copper medals to commemorate the 1861 reincorporation of Santo Domingo into Spain during Isabella II's reign. I investigated the catalogs of Spain's National Historical Archive of Madrid and was able to find the design of



⬆ The author discovered this depiction of a medal struck to commemorate Santo Domingo's return to Spanish rule in 1861.

this commemorative medal and four pages of letters and documents about the issue. I obtained digital copies of the papers and tried to reconstruct the history behind the creation of this medal.

One file is described as an “Authorization to engrave commemorative medals of the annexation of Santo Domingo.” The first page of the letter indicates that the medal's design must have the engraved motto, which translates to “The Spanish Island, remembering its ancient name, returns to its mother.” The medal bears the year 1861, written in Roman numerals MDCCCLXI, the year Santo Domingo was reincorporated into Spain. On the fourth page, the queen authorized the medal's production: “The Queen (may God save) taking into account that this fortunate event is very worthy of being commemorated, and in attention to the fact that in the case of a personal work, such as the work of an artist, the royal coffers should not be recorded in the least, *has served to grant the express authorization* [italics added for emphasis]. By order of S.M. I say this to his knowledge and corresponding effects. God saves.”

CONCLUSION

This investigation is not intended to be a comprehensive study of the Santo Domingo commemorative medal, but rather a report on the discovery of the medal's authorization and design. After reviewing the primary documents, I was able to verify that the Spanish monarchy indeed authorized the manufacture and use of the medal described here. However, I have been unable to locate any examples of minted medals. In light of the absence of any extant specimens, the following questions arise: Were medals in fact minted as authorized by the Spanish crown, and, if so, where can specimens be found? Are copies present in the archives of Spain, the Dominican Republic, or Cuba? I hope this article inspires further research on the subject of Dominican medals and other numismatic items of the Caribbean.

—Dr. Ángel O. Navarro-Zayas ♦

This c. 1859 map of Hispaniola was engraved shortly before Spain annexed Santo Domingo in 1861.

